



# CLLS NEWSLETTER

... to preseve, protect and restore.

## Solving Mysteries on Porphyry Island

Each season another mystery is laid bare after being investigated; catch-up on this past seasons triumphs!

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## Many Hands Help Out

There were many memories made this summer on the lighthouse trail.

As contributions, donations and membership have grown, so have Canadian Lighthouses of Lake Superior support for the lighthouse destinations in our area.

Our current lighthouses include; Number Ten and, Point Porphyry. Trowbridge Island Lighthouse stations with its original lens and rugged outlook is a new addition.

Our board has grown with new directors to help assist the tremendous amount of work required to live up to our mandate to preserve, promote and restore our heritage on the coast of the biggest inland freshwater lake.

Our collection of museum artifacts has also increased with many new items now present at Porphyry Island Lighthouse Station. Most importantly the lighthouse concept and operation has grown with support from other similar destinations such as; Thompson Island, CPR Slip, T-Harbour, Loon Harbour and assistance from the Thunder Bay Yacht Club.

Together, with our partners, we work to maintain and conserve our resources while engaging more people to enjoy it.

In this newsletter we will feature some of our new directors, our onsite programming, new additions to the lighthouses, some onsite projects and contributions made by our volunteers.

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“Learned how to appreciate the life in the lighthouse on a beautiful day. Great Tour!” Shirley & Vic Edmond, Dorion, ON

## Your Donations Help!

Donations are the bases of everything we do, whether time, material, or financial.

Our new onsite museum of artifacts at the Porphyry Island Lighthouse has had many new items donated, which continue to peak people's interest.

A strong supporter of the lighthouse has been Allan McNeice, who has ensured that some small artifacts might again see the light of day after being dusted off.

This includes a hand operated fog alarm box on loan to us along with the original light from the 1960's steel tower that still stands and is operational today.

The Bell map from 1869, was secured from Lakehead University archives and features original place names we'll hear more about in this newsletter.

Also proudly on display outside of the museum are two Red Chairs from Parks Canada, which were assembled in the spring for visitors to enjoy the spectacular view of the [Sleeping Giant](#) and #ShareTheChair a national on-line campaign. There are 500+ chairs coast to coast.

Donations of other items included two more bicycles for use on our trail at Porphyry and some fishing rods for recreation.

By going to the [website](#) you can donate cash and direct your funds to a particular project if your donation is over \$500. This year we had four specific projects supported by donation. Thank YOU!



### Thanks !

This season several gently used bikes appeared on site which offers the visitor with another option; instead of walking you can now bike up the trail to the point. Work is currently underway to add trailers to some of the bicycles so that our visitors and staff can haul items to the point. If you have anything to donate, please let us know by contacting us at our [website](#).



**Caption:** *The Voyageur Outward Bound Adventure School from Ely, Minnesota participated in several cleanup activities during four visits this summer. The group was responsible for clearing ½ an acre of grounds near the guest house to protect from forest fires.*

## Group Volunteer Experience Available!

This season saw several groups come together to support the volunteer needs at Porphyry Island Lighthouse. Included is the Voyageur Outward Bound School from Ely for example and closer to home many volunteers hours have been provided by the Thunder Bay Yacht Club for work on the dock. If you know of any group that would like to come and help out during the summer or in the spring, please let us know. We can accommodate our volunteers in many different ways, so please let us know how you would like to help out and we can schedule you in as a group.

## Solving some mysteries of Porphyry Island

Over the past few years CLLS has worked to uncover a number of mysteries on the island. Moving and clearing brush has led to discoveries, and helped us to further understand the lives of the keepers of the lights and their families. For example, a shiny new road sign will go up next year to honour the McKay family's presence on the island, but also to highlight Bob McKay who was instrumental in designing and constructing the road from the Porphyry Island Harbour to the lightstation, as well as bringing the two cars to the island. Further, CLLS has worked to uncover details of the individuals buried at the lightstation cemetery. As far as we understand, all 4 or 5 are children of Andrew Dick, the first light keeper on the island. An incredible collection of Andrew Dick's papers are stored presently at the Thunder Bay Museum, and a copy will be available at Porphyry Island next summer as well.

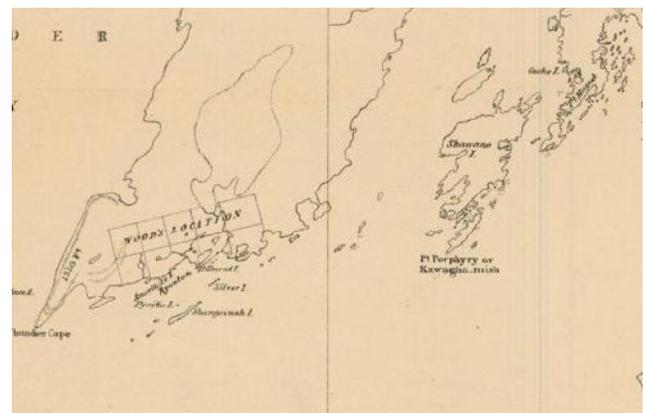
One byproduct of this research is with each new discovery we have been presented with a series of new mysteries. Recently we came across a Canadian survey map, developed by Robert Bell who travelled through the region to provide survey information for the Geological Survey of Canada, and locate a route for the National Trans-Continental Railway. Although a surveyor, Bell was keenly interested in geology, natural sciences, and ethnography of the remote regions he travelled through.

His map, produced in 1869, contains hints of his interests, and provided us with a new mystery to uncover. From the section of map noted below, Bell identified Porphyry Island as Kawagaha-Mish or Kawacha-Mish. We are aware that the island did hold significant value to first nations, as there was once a standing rock in nearby Walker's Channel, called Shimanitou, which served as guardian to the island, where it was rumored aboriginal peoples travelled to bury their deceased relatives. First Nations language scholars were unable to fully



*Robert Bell map identified Point Porphyry Island as Kawagaha-Mish*

decode the wording, although it was noted that the middle part of the work resembles “-agam” which refers to a body of water. We are hoping at some point to fully uncover the First Nations name for Porphyry Island to further understand this place where humans have visited for multiple generations. One further aside, on Bell's map, nearby Edward Island is identified as “Shawano Island” and Silver Islet is noted as “Ryanton”. Although full understanding is difficult, Shawano can be translated as “southerner, or people from the south”. We hope that this research will further visitor understanding of previous people's interactions with the landscape and environment of this region.



*Section of, Geological Survey of Canada Map (above), Robert Bell, 1869*

*Shaminitou Rock (top)– From The Eagle of Thunder Cape, by W.S. Piper, 1924*

**Welcome to the Board!** Operating the Canadian Lighthouses of Lake Superior Incorporated mandate takes a lot of time and energy by many volunteers and staff to make things happen.

Over the past three years thousands of volunteer hours have been coordinated and executed by a dedicated Board of Directors. Directors whose commitment is not only to attend monthly meetings but also to pursue and coordinate many other activities from fundraising to the hands on restoration work.

Deb Koivu joins the board as secretary, Suzanne Sabaz is coordinating volunteers, Vic Miller and Richard Matheson are working on docks and boaters, and George Armstrong is working on our safety portfolio.

We all welcome the support from our new Board of Directors and look forward to their future contributions and shared successes.

**Summer Staff** - After a second successful Canada Summer Jobs, we salute the support of our new Member of Parliament, Patty Hajdu for her support in our application.

This season saw the creation of a short video by [Coastal Production](#) to promote the opportunities for youth to provide services onsite next summer. If interested in applying, check out our website for details.

Lissi Ranta and Stephanie Cressman, both returned to their studies this fall but left the lighthouse in good fashion at the summers end. A project they both worked on and were particularly proud of was the "Plant Identification Booklet". This booklet identified 40 plants on the island that included their description, Latin name and a picture. They were also busy in the completion of the Graham Gallery and the on-site Museum.



**Caption:** Lissi Ranta and Stephanie Cressman work at the Red Chairs.



### **Board of Directors**

**Paul Capon**, Chair  
**Darrell Makin**, Vice Chair  
**Vacant** Treasurer  
**Deb Koivu** Secretary  
**Archie Hoogsteen**- Director  
**Joe Marcella**- Director  
**George Armstrong**- Director  
**Richard Matheson** Director  
**Vic Miller**- Director  
**Suzanne Sabaz**- Director  
**Paul Morrale**- Director

### **Associate Members**

Ontario Parks  
 Parks Canada- LSNMCA  
 Silver Islet Yacht Club  
 Thunder Bay Yacht Club  
 Thunder Bay Salmon Association

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[Facebook](#)

## Artist in Residence Program



This season, visitors programming included four visiting artists in residents program with varying tenures. **Gayle Buzzi** a mixed media artist enjoyed being part of the natural biosphere. Gayle would spend part of her time collecting natural artifacts and then apply them into her work. **Lois Nuttall** of Nuttall Photography spent a week capturing many assorted images on site some of which appear in this newsletter. Lois also brought her tourism experience into play by providing images of staff and operations on site. **Adam de Pencier** a nationally recognized author spent a week writing an article to be released in the near future in the Lake Superior Magazine. Finally, **Victor Chimenti** under the direction of the lighthouse group provided a short story on our summer staff 's visitor experience, using video drones and other technologies to really provide an exceptional view of our little island.

In February applications will open for three local positions and one outsider to benefit from the Artist in Resident program. All artists in residence contribute back to our annual fundraiser with a piece of art that they created. This gives the members an opportunity to see the artist work while also supporting the cause.

The Artist in Residence Program is supported by donations. The program allows artists to connect with the lighthouse experience while enjoying the Lake Superior experience.

## Membership Privileges



When purchasing a membership, “We often ask how does our membership assist with the mandate of the organization?”

Now that CLLS has been incorporated for nearly three years, the organization has realized many extra hands help in the annual restoration projects.

Members become a key player in helping the organization manage its preservation mandate. With a membership we can provide everyone with opportunities to serve at a booth handing out information, or painting one of the lighthouse stations for example.

Membership allows us to get feedback on our direction at the Annual General Meeting held in May of each years or by talking with our staff at one of the lighthouses stations.

As Robert Leverty, Executive Director from the [Ontario Historical Society](#) says “it takes people on the ground to preserve history.” Funds raised from membership play a significant roll in providing much needed resources, which covers our insurance costs annually.

Deb Koivu our secretary suggests that to renew your membership by going to the lighthouse [website](#) and register there online. The 2017-18 Membership season begins March 31.

## From our Guestbook

“What a beautiful transformation. Kuddos to those involved in the numerous hours of dedication, volunteer work. Thank you so much. Todd Siciliano “Family Ties”

“Amazing spot to visit and stay here the night. First time visitors, excellent tour, will definitely be back again! “ Lynn & Robert Marin

“We are grateful to have learned so much more about Porphyry Island, Lake Superior and Lighthouses in general. We enjoyed also so much staying in the original Keepers dwelling!” David and Christine Buzzi

“Wow what a totally amazing view in all directions. Thanks so much for maintaining this beautiful site. “ Heather McClinton

“We are descendents of Andrew Dick- Lighthouse Keeper 1880. We are honoured to be able to visit this site. Thank you for maintaining it for our generation to see. Trying to imagine what life would be like out here with 10 children?” Rogalski Family



## Graham Gallery

A new visitor experience was crafted, created and managed for the first time this season.

Created in the old fog alarm building this solar powered gallery and theatre not only provided space for an art display but also as a place to present films. This year film showed the Graham Family in 1980 living and working on the island.

The concept will hopefully flourish in the future with other themed presentations and again provide the curious with something to look forward to.

If you have any ideas as to what could be showcased next year please let us know.

